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AGRICULTURAL SITUATION REVIEW.

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

ANNOUNCEMENT: Here's the news from the farm front, folks. It comes in the AGRICULTURAL SITUATION REVIEW for June and Station _____ is putting it right on the air. The facts in this short talk come direct from the U. S. Department of Agriculture's monthly survey of farm conditions in all sections of the country and over the country as a whole. The picture is looking a little better. "Crops backward, but improving", the Review says. But stand by and hear for yourself.

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It was a backward spring as everybody knows--- a slow growing season. But, as is usually the case at this time of year and following a backward spring, the growing season is making up for lost time. Things generally seem to even up after all.

Crops are backward, but improving. That's how the Little Blue Book which is the U. S. Department of Agriculture's review of the agricultural situation for June, describes the situation. The Blue Book says---

Seasonal conditions are rather reversed over last spring in two important regions: The Corn Belt and the Cotton Belt. Last year, the South got away to a fairly early start. But corn planting was badly delayed and in part prevented by the heavy rains. This spring, corn was planted under favorable conditions and is now showing up good stands. But cotton is behind schedule.

Grass has been very slow to start this season, but haying will begin this month. Clover and alfalfa fields show the effects of a hard winter. And bad news comes to the effect that the country-wide condition of hay, as reported last month, was the poorest ever recorded. The same was true of pastures, but farmers in most sections had enough hay on hand to piece out the feeding season. In a way, it's a good thing that record stocks of old hay were carried over from last year. Hay prospects at present are none too good in the important northern and eastern States. As a matter of fact, it looks as though the eastern dairy regions may be buying western hay before another season. Still June decides the hay crop, you know.

Changing the subject, wheat harvest begins this month. Winter wheat was a doubtful looking crop as it came out of the winter season. About one-fourth of the whole winter wheat acreage was abandoned this year, Department men say. But the rains, and finally the warm weather of last month, helped out a lot and the grain has made rapid progress in the Western wheat belt and has also improved considerably in the East. Spring wheat was sown under favorable conditions, but has lately suffered some from dry, hot weather.

As for the wheat market situation, Department experts say that it has tightened up, looking to the new crop. Supplies of European wheat were less than last year and this, of course, encouraged large shipments. Both the European and Canadian stocks include low quality grain which requires a mixture of better wheat from other sources.

What about the hog market? Well, since the April rise in hog prices, the hog market has been falling about in line with last year. It is presumed that the general trend of pig production is going to be somewhat downward this year and that prices may come into the upward movement of a new cycle. A clearer light will be thrown on that possibility when the survey of the spring pig crop is available the latter part of this month. The proportion of sows sent to market suggests that possibly there was enough reduction of breeding stock east of the Mississippi river last winter so that the expected decrease in the spring pig crop may show up as even greater than was expected. In other and simpler words, this is how it looks:-- Due to a heavy marketing of sows, there was a considerable decrease in the breeding stock in the regions east of the Mississippi river last winter. This may cause a heavier decrease in the spring pig crop than was expected. Corn was scarce in the eastern belt last fall. The present price ratio between corn and hogs is unfavorable to feeders. Developments with respect to hogs will turn more or less on the outcome of the corn crop this summer.

A word on prices. The general level of farm products prices has been rising slightly this spring. Leading products which are above this general price level are cotton, corn, wheat, potatoes, beef cattle, butter, and wool. Hogs, eggs, and hay are below the general level at this time.

The national farm picture has its bright and its dark spots. Listen, and we'll review briefly how things look in the different key regions.

In the East, crops are making progress although they were considerably delayed in planting. Stands of oats, potatoes, and corn are reported as beginning to show up well. Wheat is heading in the more southern territory. Fruit trees blossomed heavily. Dairy farmers are somewhat handicapped by late pastures and higher feed prices, but farmers are paying very high prices for fresh cows and are raising more heifer calves. Poultrymen are a bit disturbed at higher feed prices.

All crops made rapid growth in the South during the past two weeks, but they are decidedly late. Cotton is a spotted crop, with stands irregular. Planters have finished chopping in some sections. Replanted cotton is just coming up in other regions. Some Southern regions, notably north Texas and Oklahoma, are very backward, due to rains. Corn planting is very late; in fact, it's hardly finished yet--- but germination and growth have been rapid. Winter oats are harvested. The condition of spring oats, potatoes, rice, truck crops, and fruit is reported as generally good although these crops are late in most sections.

Things are late in the Corn Belt. Corn generally was planted under good conditions, and shows good stands, and is now being cultivated. Winter wheat improved considerably last month, but many fields were plowed up and the crop that's left is very irregular. Farmers in the Corn Belt also plowed up some clover on account of winter damage. Many farmers report poor stands of oats and some oat land has been replanted to corn. Crops generally are a week to 10 days late, but are making up lost time now.

R-A.S. 6/4/28.

Winter wheat is headed and looking good in the Wheat Belt. The last two weeks have been very favorable for the grain in Kansas and Nebraska. Harvesting will soon be under way in Texas, although heavy rains in that State and in Oklahoma are holding the work back. Spring wheat was sown under fairly favorable conditions in the north, but the young grain has suffered lately, from Montana to Minnesota, by reason of hot weather, drought, and winds. Similar reports have come in from Canada. Potatoes, sorghums, flax, and other supplemental crops, are somewhat late but are generally making a satisfactory start.

Reports from the Range Country say that ranges are in fairly good condition except in dry sections in Arizona and eastern Montana. Grass was slow to start and crops are generally late east of the Continental Divide. Livestock has moved to the high ranges and is in good condition as a rule. Some local losses of lambs are reported from Utah and Nevada, but it's said that the lamb loss is small in total. There's plenty of water in most sections. Farmers and ranchers are cutting alfalfa now. Wheat, sugar beets, and irrigated crops are doing well.

Northern parts of the Pacific Coast region suffered from a very dry spell during May with bad effects on wheat, late grains, and grass. Irrigation water is plentiful, but the upland crops need rain. The same condition extends into sections of California, but the crops in the latter State have done well as a general rule. Grain harvest is about to begin in this region. Truck shipments are heavy. Fruit is making good progress. Some complaint of heavy drop of pears and early fruit has come in from Washington State.

The crop report issued on May 9 by the Crop Reporting Board showed an unusually heavy abandonment of winter wheat and low condition of winter wheat and rye as of May 1st. Abandonment of winter wheat acreage was heavy all the way from the Alleghenies to the Missouri river and in the eastern plains area from South Dakota to western Texas and New Mexico. Roughly, two-thirds of the crop was abandoned in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Kentucky. The report says that the winter wheat condition was 74.9% of normal on May 1st. This indicates an average yield of 13.4 bushels per acre and a total winter wheat production this year of 486,478,000 bushels, compared with a yield of 14.6 bushels an acre and a total production of 552,384,000 bushels in 1927.

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ANNOUNCEMENT: You have just heard Station _____ broadcasting Uncle Sam's farm situation review for June 1, 1928. Watch for the July report which this Station will put on the air on Monday, July 2, or shortly thereafter.

